



# Australian Bureau of Statistics

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### Feature Article - Architecture: the profession

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The Royal Australian Institute of Architects incorporating the Tasmanian Chapter, formed in 1936, was preceded by the Tasmanian Institute of Architects, itself dating from 1903.

The Chapter represents the interests of 119 Corporate Members, 16 Graduate Members and 28 Student Members. The Institute, as instanced by its Code of Professional Conduct, Environmental Manifesto and Manifesto on Barrier Free Design, demonstrates the concern of the architectural profession for the quality of the built environment.

The most public manifestation of The Royal Australian Institute of Architects members' activities is the annual awards program, where awards are given for the most outstanding buildings entered for the year in each of the major categories: Residential, New Buildings and Recycling and Conservation.

In addition, one of these awards is offered each year on a triennial rotation, and is contested by the award recipients in that category for the preceding 3 years. A Student Award is also given. Entry to the Architecture Awards is limited to work carried out in Tasmania by architects registered in Tasmania.

The Chairman of the Awards Jury for 1997, Mr Ken Latona, said: 'Architecture is the proposition about idea and location and is influenced by time and culture. If the architect can construct the idea or concept with clarity, maintaining originality, continuity and sensibility, keeping intact those first honourable thoughts at the beginning of the design sequence; and create a building that satisfies the client, the builder, the budget and the public then this calls for recognition of such work and for celebration. This is a far brighter, healthier and balanced picture than that driven by the economic rationalists whose only interest is cost, and time'.

The Chapter President, Mr Keith Drew, described this year's awards entries as 'high quality design in times of recession'. He said: 'the architectural profession is resilient. Architects survive because of one major attribute: commitment to good design'. Mr Drew continued: 'In the face of changing economic circumstances, however, architects are being forced to reconsider their traditional business practices. Without a doubt the most dangerous influence on the architect's ability to deliver a quality service is competitive fee bidding. It is self-destructive and ironically counter-productive to the long-term objectives of the client.'

'Fee bidding, where price is the major factor, impairs the architect's ability to offer the very service which is of greatest benefit to the client: adding value to the project at its inception by good design. Fee bidding often leads to the first workable solution being adopted rather than striving for the optimum solution', he said.

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